A Funeral SERMON

From this

TEXT,

MATTH. 25. 46.

Shewing the Torments of Hell, and Joys of Heaven.

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MATTH. 25. 46.

And these shall go into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life Eternal.

THE Verse in which my Text is, *Janus*-like, has a double Aspect. It casts a sharp Eye upon the Wicked, a favourable pleasing Look upon the Righteous.

Here is the Torments of Hell, and the Joys of

Heaven, drawn in their lively Colours, the Wicked are doomed to eternal Woes, and the Righteous are ſent into everlaſting Bliſs, as runs my Text; *The Righteous into Life eternal.*

In the latter part of this Chapter, beginning at *verſe* 31. we have a plain deſcription of the great and terrible Day of the Lord; of the Day of Judgment, of the Judge himſelf, which is Chriſt the Son of God.

For before him ſhall be gathered all the Nations of the World, *v.* 31. & 32. and

and you have here the Perſons to be judged, and they are Sheep and Goats, and he ſhall ſet the Sheep, on his right Hand, and the Goats on his left. *v.* 33.

And then you have thoſe Rewards which are beſtowed on the right-hand-Men, which are righteous Perſons; here's that Inheritance Chriſt the Judg will give them Poſſeſſion of, they ſhall be folded up in the Arms of Chriſt.

With a Come ye Bleſſed inherit the Kingdom prepared for you before the Foundations of the

World were lay'd. *v.* 34.

And here is that dreadful Soul-tormenting Sentence, that is passed upon the Goats, which are left-hand-Men, Sinners dying in their Sins.

Depart from me, ye Curſed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. *v.* 41.

And then you have the reasons, why the right-hand-Men are rewarded, and the left-hand-Men punished, in *v.* 35. & 36. and in *v.* 42. 43.

Now this Verse, in which my Text is, is the Concluſion, or the final Deter-

Determination of this general Assize: One part of the Court must go one way, and the other the other; this Verse shews them their allotted places.

These wicked, these left-hand-Men, those that did not feed him when he was an hungry, nor cloath him when naked, nor visit him when sick and in Prison; these must go into everlasting Punishment.

And the other, the righteous, the right-hand Men, those that when Christ was an hungry,

gave him Meat, &c. these *Righteous* must go into Life Eternal.

And this Life is not a momentary one, where you shall have Pleasures and Joys for a short time, but it is an eternal Life that shall never tast of Death.

But you shall live and have the fruition of Heavens Joys, till you have past the proper Dimensions of a vast Eternity.

You go not into such a Life as can be impaired by the Infirmities of the Flesh, the Inticements of the World, or Temptations

tions of the Devil.

For all these Distractions and Imperfections being shaken off, we shall have the full and perfect consummation of glory.

You have now God and Christ, Angells, and Saints to administer to you their best, and their chiefest Comforts. You have the injoyment of all those Blisses Heaven it self can afford.

And not only for a Month, a Year, or Age; but to all Eternity; for so says my Text, *go into eternal Life.*

These words contain

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as ſtrong a Motive to perſwade us to walk in the Paths of Righteouſneſs in this World, and as much Comfort when we depart this, and go into another, as any in the whole Book of God.

For what greater Incouragement, or Comfort to be Righteous here, than this, that we ſhall have Heaven, or eternal Life hereafter?

Which I now come to deſcribe, or give you a glimpſe, ſome imperfect Character of, for our diſcourſes of Heaven, muſt needs be weak and defective,

fective, while we are upon Earth.

This is not to be drawn to the Life, only by Pens made of the Quills plucked from the Wings of Cherubims. This is a Subject fitter for a *Moses*, after a *Pisgah* Prospect, when he breathed his last Breath in the Bosom of God.

Or for an *Aaron*, the High-Priest's Phancy, to be imployed about; when upon Mount *Hor* he is a Divesting himself of his Body of Sin, and going into eternal Life.

In the Discourfing of which,

which I ſhall ſhew you. Firſt,

That the Righteous ſhall go into this eternal Life.

Secondly, Why they ſhall go.

Thirdly, The Pleaſures or Joyes of this Life, or what it is to go into eternal Life.

To the firſt, that the Righteous ſhall Inherit eternal Life, is clear in St. *Luke*'s Goſpel. *Luk.* 16.22. Wherein it is ſaid, That when the Begger dyed he was received into *Abraham*'s Boſom.

That is, into Heaven, into the Communion and Fellow-

Fellowſhip of Believers, of all faithful Souls, of whom *Abraham* is Father.

And then fear not little Flock, it is your Father's good Pleaſure to give you a Kingdom, He that is Faithful or Righteous to the End, ſhall have given him a Crown of Life. *Rev.* 2.

This Day, ſay's our Saviour to the penitent Thief, thou ſhalt be with me in Paradiſe; that is, in Heaven, in that place where there is everlaſting Happineſs.

Though thou looſeſt a Temporal, yet I will give

thee an eternal Life; tho thou parts with Pleasures and Contents of this Life, yet I will give thee the Joys and Satisfactions of another World.

What thou loosest upon Earth, thou wilt count no Loss, compared with that which thou gainest in Heaven.

But Secondly, Why shall the Righteous go into eternal Life?

First, Because Christ has promised it you, and certainly his Word is Security enough for what he promiseth; he is not only able, but willing to perform. And

And this was one of the last Promises he gave to his Disciples, which did so revive and cherish their drooping, and disconsolate Spirits at his Departure.

I go, says he, to prepare a place for you, and I will receive you to my self, that where I am, you may be also: And that place which he prepared for them, was no other, and could be no better than Heaven it self, where they should Live and Reign Eternally with him and his Father.

Secondly, The Righte-

ous ſhall go into everlaſting Life.

Becauſe Chriſt has prayed to his Father that it ſhould be ſo; and ſurely his Requeſts cannot but be granted, for *argumentum à minore ad majus.*

Whatſoever we ask the Father in his Name ſhall be given us; then certainly what he asketh himſelf, he ſhall not be denyed.

And how fervently and importunately doth he pray, that this may be ſo: for, ſay's he; Father, I will, that thoſe which thou

thou haſt given me, may be with me, where I am, *Joh.* 17. 24.

Thirdly, The Righteous ſhall go into eternal Life.

Becauſe this is their Inheritance, and they claim it from a double Title.

Firſt, By way of Donation; eternal Life is the Gift of God, he has given it them, fear not little Flock, it is your Father's good Pleaſure to give you a Kingdom.

Secondly, It is theirs by way of Purchaſe, Chriſt has bought and paid for it for them, therefore this

is their Inheritance, and it is an Incorruptible one that faideth not away, but is reserved for them in the Heavens for ever.

They are Heirs first Born, and Co-heirs with, and joynt Heirs with Christ.

Therefore, as they have a Title to this Inheritance in this Life, they shall have Possession of it in another, and Christ himself will introduce them, with a Come ye Blessed Inherit your Kingdom.

And when they come to Reign, they shall wear Crowns, not of Gold, but Glory,

Glory, they ſhall be cloathed with Glory, Immortality, and eternal Life.

Thirdly, The Joys and Pleaſures of an eternal Life, or, what it is to go into eternal Life.

Firſt, He that has eternal Life, is freed from all manner of Ignorance in, and Miſapprehenſion of Truth, all theſe mutining Regiments ſhall then be disbanded. All thoſe ſpecious Pretences or Colours of Religion, theſe Enſigns of Holyneſs, ſhall then be wound up and laid aſide, all thoſe dark

& intricate Riddles, which are of the wiſe old Serpents Injection, and prove Troubleſom & Afflictive to the Soul.

All theſe ſhall then be unfolded, for though the Righteous, the People of God, are delivered from damnable Soul-deſtroying Hereſies, which bring ſwift Deſtruction, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks:

Yet they are ſubject to Errors, and Miſapprehenſion of things which prove troubleſom to themſelves and others.

But when once they come to Heaven, to have the

the Joys and Pleaſures of another Life, then theſe Scales of Ignorance ſhall drop from their Eyes, and then they ſhall have a perfect Knowledg of God, *and all Goſpel Myſteries.*

Then their Underſtanding ſhall be clear, and they ſhall behold God in the Beauty of Holineſs, they ſhall ſee him, not in a Riddle or Glaſs darkly, but they ſhall ſee him Face to Face.

As Saint *Paul* ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. or as Saint *John*, we ſhall ſee him as he is, and this is ſuch Joy, ſuch Pleaſure, ſuch infi-

infinite unſpeakable Satisfaction to the Soul that Eye hath not ſeen it, neither Ear heard it.

Neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, what God has prepared for them which love him.

What Joy and Comfort it is, to have the Fruition of God, and his Son; is not to be conceived by Man upon Earth, they are not capable of apprehending ſuch Glory.

But when we come into Heaven, to enter into this eternal Life, then we ſhall ſee all that is worth the

the Sight, even God and Christ; they in all things, and all things in them.

For in them there are Pleasures of Joy for evermore, which cannot, but to all Eternity satisfie and delight our Souls; this is the first thing that we shall Enjoy, when we go into eternal Life.

Secondly, As he that hath eternal Life shall know God, so likewise he shall love him; which makes the Joys and Pleasures of an eternal Life beyond measure full and satisfactory.

This Grace of Love,

is

is of the longeſt Duration, it continues to all Eternity; for when once we come into eternal Life, all other Graces ceaſe.

For Faith, which lays hold upon the Promiſes of Heaven; when once we come thither, that is finiſhed; and Hope, with which Patience expects another, and a better Life, when once we enjoy it, that is at an end too.

But Love ſtill remains, and this it is, which ſweetens and perfumes all the Delights we ſhall have the Injoyments of, when we

we have the Fruition of God and Chriſt in Heaven.

This ſhall Adorn and Beautify the Souls of Saints, for it is the only Beauty Spot in the Faces of Angels. When once we come to this eternal Life, we ſhall be all Love, for we ſhall find the Love of God ſtrengthening of us, to Love him with his own Love, and him whom we deſired to Love, in this we can, nor ſhall do, no other then Love in the World to come.

For our Wills ſhall be conformable to his, and

it ſhall be our greateſt delight to do his Will, for our Wills ſhall perfectly fall in with God's, and nothing ſhall be good or acceptable to us, which is not ſo to him.

So that we ſhall need no Promiſes to allure, no Threatnings to affright us, into a Conformity to him.

We ſhall be ſo much in Love with God & Chriſt, that we can never leave off Admiring, and Adoring the Excellencies of Heaven; we ſhall never think our ſelves weary in gazing upon theſe Beautys.

But

But the more we see Christ, the more we shall love him, we shall be as it were amazed at his Excellency and Glory; We shall see him, and love him; we shall love him, and praise him.

We shall sing Blessing, and Glory, and Honour, to him that sits on the Throne, and the Lamb, for evermore, *Rev.* 5. 13.

Thirdly, he which goes into eternal Life, has the company of God and Christ, the enjoyment of all the blisful Society of Saints and Angels; he shall have the Fellowship

of Prophets, and Apostles, of Patriarchs, and Martyrs.

All their Gifts and Graces shall be to their Content; then they shall meet all those with their honourable Scars, that have suffered Martyrdom for the Name, and Sake of Jesus.

Undoubtedly, one of the greatest Punishments, the Damned in Hell do suffer; is, that they are perpetual Companions of the Devil and his Angels. Of those which have brought them, through their own Follys, and in-

considerations, into these Sorrows.

So on the contrary, it must needs be an unexpressible Joy and Pleasure to the Righteous Persons, to meet a God and Christ, Saints and Angels, Prophets and Apostles, all their Godly Friends and Relations in Heaven.

And to be of their Society, singing Praises and Hallelujahs to him that sits on the Throne; their Joy at this Heavenly Society, will be beyond Measure and Satisfactory.

Dyagoras dyed for Joy,

when he saw his three Sons Crowned for Victors in the Olympick Games.

And good old *Simeon*, when he had but seen Christ with his bodily Eyes, the first Petition he puts up to God is, that he may be removed from this into eternal Life, *Luke* 2. 29.

Lord, now let thy Servant depart in Peace, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.

What Joy would it have been for him, and what Joy will it be for us, to see God and Christ Face to Face as they are?

To have the Company of Saints and Angels, Cherubins and Seraphins, and all the bleſſed Quire of Spirits; what Joy will it be to us, to meet all our Godly Friends, Acquaintance, and Relations, and to be with them Crowned for ever, with Immortality, with Glory, and eternal Life?

This being the Bliſs, the Felicity of the Righteous; well might St. *Paul* deſire to be diſſolved, and be with Chriſt; which is far better, or beſt of all: as if he had ſaid, it is far better to be with Chriſt,

then to be here upon Earth, ſurrounded with all manner of Dangers.

Then to be here viſited with an innumerable company of Diſeaſes, to be vexed with malignant Diſtempers, and painful Laxations, which do indiſpoſe us, and hinder us in the performance of Duty.

Far better to be with Chriſt, then here conſtantly to be aſſaulted with a foul Regiment of Temptations, but when once we come to Chriſt, all theſe ſhall be diſbanded.

For

For no Serpent shall hiss in this Paradise, for then the great old Tempter shall be cast into the bottomless Pit; for in Heaven no Devil with his Temptations to disturb your Devotions, no worldly Concerns to distract you in your Duties. No Hippocrite to allay your Charity, and keep your good Affections in a close Reserve.

But here you may attend upon the Service of God without any distraction, here you may serve him without any Convulsions, or Injecti-

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ons from the World, the Flesh and the Devil.

For when once you enter this eternal Life, then shall nothing hinder you from continual loving and praising God.

And you, and all the rest of the Saints, and Angels in Heaven, shall joyn in resounding the Praises of the most High, they shall sing forth his Praises with the most-high sounding Cymbals.

Oh! What ravishing Musick will it be when all the Quire of Heaven, shall joyn to ecchо forth Anthems on the Divine Glory? Oh!

Oh! How happy will the righteous Person be, as happy as God and Christ, Angels and Saints can make him; when he has nothing to do but to sing all Laud, all Power, all Honour, to the sacred Trinity, to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Oh! How many Felicities doth he Enjoy, that keeps an eternal Jubilee with God and Christ, Saints and Angels? And this he does that enters into eternal Life, for he is of that blisful Society.

Applica-

APPLICATION.

IF the Righteous ſhall go into eternal Life, and have ſo much Joy and Pleaſure, as appears by what has been ſhewed you.

Then in the firſt place, we are informed of the Folly and Madneſs, the Vanity and Inconſideration of thoſe Men, which live ſo in this, as if they did not care; what became of them in another World.

That by the courſe of their Lives, ſeem to be of the Opinion, that if they have the Honours, the Advantages,

vantages, and Preferments of this, they matter little, what becomes of the Joys, Pleasures, and Felicities of an eternal Life.

Oh! They will one day complain against themselves, and though too late, of their Follys, that they should be such Fools; as to throw away Heaven for Trifles.

What is it, that ever they were Masters of, which they would not give for one drop of cold Water to cool their sinful Tongues, to extinguish these Hellish Inflamations.

What is it which they

would not give in exchange for their Souls.

But were the whole World in their Poſſeſſion, and if they offered it, it would not be taken; for loſe but a Soul once, and it is loſt for ever: For the loſs of a Soul is an irrecoverable loſs, once in Hell, and for ever there.

Therefore, O ye Sinners be wiſe in time, uſe your Intereſt while you may, work while it is called to day, and don't you loſe Heaven for the unſatisfying Pleaſures upon Earth.

For the very beſt things here below, that which

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our Affections ſtream moſt after, is of a very ſhort duration, of a tranſient Nature; and if it be ſweet, it is very ſhort.

It's like Lightening, *ſimul oritur, & moritur*, it lives and dies in an inſtant: therefore be adviſed to withdraw your Affections from Earth, and ſet them upon Heaven: Firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God.

Uſe 2. Is it ſo, that the Righteous ſhall enter into eternal Life? then from hence be adviſed to live the Life of the Righteous here, if you intend to live the Life of the Righteous hereafter.

For those which will not fight for Christ, shall never Reign with Christ; those which will not suffer for him, shall never Triumph with him: Therefore let us deny our selves, and take up our Cross and follow him.

Let us indeavour to be Holy, as he is Holy, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness, both of Flesh and Spirit, and grow up unto perfect Holiness, in the Fear of the Lord.

We must endeavour to be Holy here, if we will be Holy hereafter, for it is this which qualifies us to

to enter into the unſpeakable Joys of Heaven, into eternal Life.

Be exhorted therefore to Pray, that as you have the ſpace of Repentance, ſo you may have the Grace of Repentance.

That we may be ſorry for, be humble under, and repent of thoſe Sins, which if are not, will ſtand as ſo many Bars againſt Heaven Gate, and hinder us from entring into this everlaſting Reſt.

Let us do as *David* did, eat Aſhes with our Bread, and mingle our Drink with our weeping; that

is, have humble, and contrite Spirits for all our Tranſgreſſions, and then we ſhall be able to offer up an acceptable Service to God, and receive an ample Reward from him.

Let us confeſs our Sins to him, and then he will have Mercy on us; then, according to his great Goodneſs, and the multitude of his Mercies, he will put away our Offences: If we Confeſs, God will Pardon; therefore Repent and amend your Lives, and that ſpeedily.

For *Pœnitentia ſera rarò vera*, lateſt Repentance is ſeldom ſafeſt; therefore be up now and doing, be Holy in all manner of holy Converſation.

You ſee what your Incouragement is, you can have no greater

greater, and I am ſure no better; you ſhall go into eternal Life.

Thirdly, ſhall the Righteous go into eternal Life, and is this the Portion that ſhall be given to them? it will be the prudenteſt Courſe that any of us can take, to try, and examine the Sincerity, and Reality of our Titles to this Inheritance.

See how we can evidence our ſelves to be Heirs of this Kingdom, and the beſt Evidences you can produce to prove that you have a Right to this Inheritance, is Regeneration and Adoption.

For without a Man be Born again, is our Saviour's Anſwer to *Nicodemus*, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

Then if you will have any

Intereſt in this Heavenly Inheritance, you muſt be Gods Children by Adoption. *Rom.* 8. 17.

And Sons are Heirs, Coheirs, and Joynt Heirs with Chriſt; God will give Heaven to none but thoſe which are Heavenly born, born of God.

God will give a Patrimony of Glory hereafter to none but thoſe that have an Eſtate of Grace here: therefore if you will have Heaven when you die, you muſt get Holineſs while you live.

You muſt be Holy in all manner of holy Converſation, you muſt be cloathed with the long white Robes of Chriſts Righteouſneſs, which is the Garments of the Saints, before you can be in a fit Dreſs, and Habit, to enter into the Holy of Holies. For

For Righteousnes and Holiness, are the richest Jewels a Saint can be Adorned with; this it is which will make you meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

Therefore examine, and try, whether you can make out your Titles to Heaven: to eternal Life upon these Accounts, see whether you can find out of Scripture, that your Names are Recorded in the Court-Rolls of Heaven.

If you can find this, you shall have the blessed News of Come ye Blessed; go into eternal Life.

Fourthly, Is it for that eternal Life; an everlasting Inheritance shall be the Portion of the Righteous; then let this Inheritance, this Kingdom, be that we pursue after, and contend for.

Here's Field-room enough for every

every Mans Ambition; here he that has the most aspiring Thoughts may find Satisfaction.

Desire what you will, get Heaven and you get that. Do you covet to be honourable? why then be Righteous, and go into eternal Life, and you shall be Kings and Princes; for so Believers are called, *Exod.* 19.5.

Is Riches that you aim at? Why, when you come home to Heaven, you shall be Heirs of a Kingdom, you shall take Possession of an everlasting Inheritance.

You shall be crowned with Immortality, and eternal Life.

Do you desire to be honourable in your Relations? you shall have God to be your Father, and Christ Jesus Elder Brother.

Do you wish to be Honourable in your Attendance? You shall have, not Men, but Angels,

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the First-born of the Creation to be of your Retinue.

Lastly, Is it so; shall the Righteous go into eternal Life? if this shall be their Portion, what a Cordial is this to the Righteous against the Distempers and Diseases, the Men of the World do indeavour to infect them with.

What though the Men of the World do impair your Credits, and stain your good Names; why should you grieve at it, for all these at last will signify nothing?

For when once you enter this eternal Life, all Tears shall be wiped from your Eys, and all Dirt from your Reputations.

What though you are poor and in a mean Condition here, yet you shall be Rich and Honourable hereafter: What thô the World frowns, yet Christ will smile upon you. What

What matter is it if they Curse, so long as Christ Blesseth you, what Injury is done to a righteous Person, if the World refuses, and Christ receives him, and takes him in his Arms, and Kisseth him with the Kisses of his Lips.

What need you care if you live here in a Cottage, since when you die, you shall go into a Palace, into a Kingdom, and that a most glorious One, a Kingdom that shall have no End.

That shall endure to all Eternity, for you shall go into eternal Life.

Which God grant of his Mercy that we may all enjoy, for the Merits of his Son our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To whom be all Honour, &c.

FINIS.